

The Pensacola Journal

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FEDERAL JUDGES AND THEIR EXPENSES.

Since the impeachment proceedings were instituted against Judge Charles Swayne a great deal of interest has been evinced all over the country in the possible outcome of the case. Now that the charges have narrowed down to the question of expenses the interest is, if anything, greater than before because of the possibility of similar charges being preferred against other federal judges who, it is alleged, have made a practice of charging up the maximum amount allowed, \$10 per day, whether actual expenses reached that figure or not. In this connection the Atlanta Constitution says:

In view of Secretary Shaw's tabular showing that a number of federal judges are in the habit of charging the full limit of \$10 per day to cover expenses when on duty outside their districts, it may be well to again call attention to the difference between many such cases and that of Judge Swayne, of Florida.

It is the theory back of all expense allowances that an official of the government and especially a federal judge, is entitled to enjoy just as good accommodations when off performing service for the government as he enjoys at his home. The judge who is assigned for service in a large city, to illustrate, should take the best hotel accommodations and the government expects that he will. The government is ready to pay all the expenses involved, but as in all other cases a maximum limit is fixed.

The judge who takes such accommodations and whose legitimate expenses reach \$10 a day, as they certainly do in many such cases, is entitled to the maximum limit and is certainly doing nothing improper in making the charge. A judge would doubtless be within the provisions of the law if he were to take very elaborate hotel accommodations—far better, if that is possible, than he enjoys at his home.

But in the Swayne case it is shown that he charged the full \$10 a day at a time when he was paying out for his actual expenses very much less—in one instance, as we recall it, only \$1.25 a day. The house committee found that with Judge Swayne it was simply a case of "doing" the government out of the difference, which is a crime and nothing else.

It is not for a minute to be assumed because a number of other judges have been found charging the maximum expense allowance that these have been improper charges, or that, as has been insinuated, other impeachments are to follow. If it can be found that these judges, or any of them, have been using this expense allowance as a means to an increase of personal revenue as is shown in the Swayne case, such a judge will be called to account.

It is well to keep in mind the exact nature of the crime of which Judge Swayne is accused. There is no good ground for the suspicion that other judges have been guilty of such petty thievery, even if these judges have been in the habit of charging maximum expense bills.

The presidential electors selected at the national election on November 8, met at Tallahassee on Monday and cast the vote of Florida for Parker and Davis, Hon. T. A. Jennings, of this city, being selected to convey the ballots to Washington, where the entire electoral vote will be canvassed by congress on February 8.

The action of the Florida electors in thus honoring Mr. Jennings by selecting him to perform this important duty is in line with a suggestion made by The Journal shortly after the election last fall. The Journal is glad to know that the views it expressed at that time are shared by the honorable electors of the state, and is also gratified that so great an honor should fall upon such worthy shoulders.

Residents of Florida take keen delight in reading the harrowing accounts of terrific blizzards and zero temperature in the northern states, while the ice wagon down here continues its daily rounds.

Unless General Stossel wants to be branded as a false prophet he will have to wander back to Port Arthur when he gets ready to shuffle off this mortal coil.

The locks of the Panama canal consist at present of deadlocks among the absentee commissioners, says the Age-Herald.

The dominion of Davy Jones is also being Russified.

VOX POPULI.

Pleasures of the country.

No one can appreciate the real comfort and pleasure that a country life affords until an absence from it for years seeking other sources in busy cities or travel in many states where what may only be secured with less exposure to temptations and a sense of independence as in the country. Back again to tread in freedom the unpolluted soil, where the foothill gives back no echoing sound from the yielding grass, breathing the air pure and sweet from the grassy fields or pine-scented forest, one feels like taking a new lease on life.

But conditions have undergone many changes since when country life was abandoned years ago and many disastrous changes are visible on every hand—changes that cannot be remedied for many decades.

The humble shack of the squatter or settler that years ago furnished all the comfort of shelter and warmth gives him the needed protection, although the pine knots burn as brightly on his fire place and the clapping roof shelter him from the rain; the chilling north wind is no longer vestibled by miles of virgin forest and his poorly built house is penetrated on many sides by an air that almost chills the marrow in the bones. His natural protection disappeared before the axe of the log man to feed the ever-devouring saw mill, when the demands of greed and civilization were alike satisfied. Ranges for an unlimited number of cattle and sheep which grew fat on rich grasses are no longer productive as feeding grounds; exposing the soil to the intense heat of summer by the removal of protecting foliage, has destroyed or rendered non-nutritious many varieties of the native grasses and all that is left to the wandering herds and flocks is tasteless grass, and the coming of cold weather find them neither shelter nor food for their gaunt forms.

Before these disastrous changes were made throughout the country, the forest were gray with bright plumaged birds and vocal with songs warbled from the throats of migratory birds from the far north. None of these attractions exist to-day. The "pot hunter" has been abroad in the land and has made such a merciless slaughter of the feathered tribe that scarcely a chirp is heard among the "black-jacks," and if one is brave or courageous than another, the only shot gun in the hand of some idler is there to take its life, as the writer witnessed a few Sabbaths ago.

One of the most desirable of insectivorous of the birds common to this locality had lighted on a dead pine tree and had barely settled on its perch before a deadly gun was aimed and discharged and brought the poor thing to the ground in the agonies of dissolution. This cruel act was done by a well-dressed man, but a violator of both a sacred and statute law.

He did not see me, and when he later the writhing bird where it had fallen, I sought the spot and ended the agony of this act of unwarranted cruelty by dispatching the bird. I do not know the duties the law defines for the "game warden" to perform, whether he is to look after offenders as closely on the Sabbath day as on other days. I think he would find as many offenders on that day as during the week.

EX-INSPECTOR.

TRIUMPHS IN WARFARE
AND IN REALMS OF PEACE.

San Diego Sun.

The year 1904, heavily darkened as it has been by the clouds of war, has nevertheless made much remarkable history in all departments of human progress. Notwithstanding one of the greatest wars in all history has held the center of the international stage, the year has been noteworthy for congresses looking to man's social, intellectual and spiritual betterment, and it has seen issued a world-wide call of the nations to a second Hague conference for the promotion of universal peace.

The year has given us one of the greatest battles, one of the most remarkable sieges and one of the most marvelous series of brilliant victories ever known.

But it has given us, too, equally remarkable triumphs in the realms of peace. The year has seen a decision of the long-mooted question of a trans-isthmian canal and the inauguration of the great work. A triumph of engineering skill but little inferior has been concluded in the completion of the sea wall at Galveston, Texas. Another like achievement of great engineering skill was the completion

of the New York subway.

It has been the year of the largest crops ever raised in this country. Steamship, locomotive, automobile and trotting records have been smashed.

Distinct advances have been made in the fields of both wireless telegraphy and aerial navigation. Other notable scientific achievements lie in the "seeing telephone" and in the improved method of photography in colors.

The legal and financial event of the year in this country was the antitrust decision of the United States supreme court in the Northern Securities merger case—one of the most important and far-reaching decisions ever handed down by that body.

In a way distinctly discreditable, the year in this country has been marked by a total of 130 lynchings, against the highest previous record of 104.

The labor troubles of the year, so marked that at one time 150,000 men and women were on strike, have been given unusual importance because of the remarkable developments in the Colorado strike.

A sociological event of the year deserving special mention was the establishment with clerical sanction of what has become known as the "subway saloon."

A total of \$40,000,000 has been given during the year to charity and public benefactions. The Baltimore fire and the burning of the excursion steamer General Slocum are horrors of the year that will be historic.

In spite of war and some great disasters, it has not been a bad year, particularly for the people of this country. The conditions and the outlook were never better than to-day.

COTTON QUESTION AS
AFFECTING PLANTERS.

Courier-Journal.

The aspect of the cotton question, as affecting the planters, is not encouraging. The great area in which the plant can be raised and the large number of persons engaged in the business make it impracticable to have union of action in any scheme which will limit the production, or control the crop when marketable, so as to force spinners or speculators to pay a high price for it. In other words it seems impracticable to form the Cotton Trust in the interest of the producers, and that appears to be the best of all the schemes now discussed. It is a little curious to see the change wrought in the short space of a year. Twelve months ago the planters were alarmed lest, from the boll worm, a still greater shortage would ensue, and all energies were applied for providing against that danger. The consequence was that there was the unprecedented acreage of 31,000,000 acres put in cultivation, which, at the percentage of crop prospects in the early summer, as reported by the census bureau, promised a yield of 15,000,000 bales. Yet the planters escaped this threatened calamity, and with the December estimate of 12,162,000 bales the price of cotton fell below the cost of production.

One unfortunate feature in the case is the lack of practical co-operation among the planters. This was first disclosed in the Shreveport boll worm convention, when the cotton planters of the eastern states proposed, as a means of reducing production next year, that the boll worm area in Texas should remain unplanted. This created no little bad feeling being resented by Texas, and since then there has been other evidences of lack of co-operation. A congress a Georgia delegate leads in a movement to abolish the estimates of the census bureau, and a Texas member as strenuously advocates it. What will be the result is difficult to foretell. But there can be no question that the only sensible thing to be done is to reduce the area of production. By what system of co-operation this can be effected is not plain. But if the planters cannot agree among themselves, the suggestion of the Memphis Planters' Journal may serve the purpose. This is for the land owners and "supply merchants" to enforce a reduction of acreage by agreeing not to rent, nor advance money on supplies, to any grower who plants more than a stipulated number of acres of cotton to each plow animal—the number being in inverse ratio to the fertility of the soil. The trouble about it is, as in regard to all other schemes, to bring about sufficient co-operation to make it effective. The ultimate result will doubtless be, as in regard to corn, wheat and other of the staple crops, to let each farmer or planter act on his own judgment and ultimately learn wisdom by experience, however expensive. There is the same objection in principle to a cotton as to a steel or other trust.

PROPOSED VAGRANT LAW
FOR STATE OF FLORIDA.

(Live Oak Democrat.)

During the campaign preceding the last primary election a great many candidates for legislative honors expressed themselves as favoring a vagrant law, and most of them cited the Georgia law as a model for Florida.

A few days ago Judge Emory Chandler, recognized as one of the ablest jurists in the South, rendered a decision in which he declared the Georgia vagrant law unconstitutional as it was in conflict with personal liberty.

Upon mature deliberation we are at a loss to understand just how a vagrant law can be framed that will be constitutional. There must be a line of distinction between the vagrant and the lawful citizen, and where shall it be drawn? There are a great many times when some of our best men happen to be without ready cash in their pockets. Certainly they are not vagrants. There are a great many others who, seemingly, do not work, because having acquired a sufficiency, have no need to be continually at it. They are not vagrants.

Some of the most skilled laborers

in the country are often out of employment, from various causes, and are forced to seek a means of subsistence among strangers. Shall we condemn them as vagrants because, possibly, of unavoidable circumstances?

As stated, there must be a line of distinction, and it will take the combined efforts of our ablest law makers to draw it, if indeed, it can be done. That there should be some law to force the idle and vicious element to work is acknowledged, but it seems that vagrant laws will not stand the test.

Here is food for thought for those law makers who promised the people to enact a vagrant law in Florida. If one cannot be formed that will stand the searchlight of the courts, it is better to save time and money by letting it alone. We are in favor of some means to acquire the necessary results, but do not favor the enactment of a law simply to gratify personal ambition to be annulled at the first test in the courts.

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM STATE PAPERS.

Discrimination in Rates.

The S. A. demurs to Governor Broward's statement that "the conservative administration of our railroad commission has been largely responsible for the material prosperity of the state," unless he primarily referred to Jacksonville and other seaport cities. Now if the governor will urge the legislator and the railroad commission to arbitrate for all of the state in a fair and equitable rate and not discriminate in rates against interior cities, he will be dealing fairly with all of the people.—Ocala Star.

Hon. David B. Hill.

Let us acknowledge the bow of David Benet Hill. He has labored long and might have been a more successful politician as well as a richer man had he labored less, but no word of accusation should follow him. He may have erred in judgment, he has been dictatorial and he has often sought to sacrifice principle to expediency, but those who have sinned more who have not resigned a tithe of the criticism hurled at him. His opponents have not been accused or suspected of putting a dishonest dollar in his pocket, and that should go far with the people to whose service or guidance he now denies the closing years of his life that he may die in peace—not rich, certainly.—Jacksonville Times-Union.

Administration of Jennings.

Governor Jennings has retired from the governorship of Florida, leaving behind him a record of which any man would have just cause to feel proud. His administration has been clean, business-like and honest and it will go down in history as one of the most prosperous and ablest that has ever been given to Florida.—West Palm Beach Star.

Texas Holds the Record.

The Florida Pardoning Board cannot hold a candle to Governor Lanham, of Texas, who, on Christmas day, turned loose on the law-abiding people of the state twenty-seven convicted felons, several of them murderers. That is surely going a little too far.—St. Augustine Record.

A New Administration.

Once more has the Land of Flowers bloomed out under a new administration. The administration of Hon. W. S. Jennings has expired, and that of Hon. Napoleon B. Broward takes its place.

Governor Jennings retires from the high and responsible position he has held the last four years with added laurels to his distinguished record. For his high and patriotic administration the state has prospered to a wonderful degree. He has left behind him an example and a condition of affairs that his distinguished successor may sincerely and honestly desire to equal, but can scarcely hope to exceed.

Governor Jennings was an ideal democratic governor, and is justly entitled to highest honor and credit for the perfection of his gubernatorial administration and the lasting gratitude and admiration of the people of Florida. All honor to Hon. W. S. Jennings!—Westville Advocate and Advertiser.

Gilchrist For Speaker.

The announcement of Hon. A. W. Gilchrist that he will be a candidate for the speakership of the next house meets with much favor. General Gilchrist has for years been one of the most active and spirited workers in the field of politics and business in the state. His official career as a legislator has been aggressive and spirited and marked by an unwavering adherence to his principles. If he has at times gone to extremes and criticized unreservedly certain measures it has always been in opposition to what he believed to be inimical to the interests of the people of the state. There is no man in the state better equipped for the performance of the duties of the speakership. His administration will be signally marked by absolute fearlessness, a keen sense of justice and the highest ideals of fairness and impartiality. General Gilchrist is worthy of the position and his faithful services to the party entitle him to it.—Dade City Democrat.

A Historical Coin.

We were shown yesterday a half-dollar coined in 1808. It is now in possession of Mr. Tebe Cawthon and is said to be the identical fifty cents with which "Old Hickory" Jackson paid his fare over the L. & N. from River Junction, when he captured Aguinaldo at Pensacola in 1812. The coin is about the size of a small gopher, and shows unmistakable evidence that our money-makers of to-day are "on to their job" a little better than they were then. It's a pity money can't talk literally as well as figuratively. What a batch of interesting "copy" this old coin could give out! If it could talk—De Puniak Breeze.

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